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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1913.

THE NATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY.

No other recommendation to President Wilson's first annual message has caused half so much comment as his proposal of national primaries for the nomination of candidates for the presidency, such a choice would involve the abolition of the national nominating convention and establish the selection of presidential candidates by direct vote of the people. So radical an alteration of our political structure can come, if come it does, only after the most careful consideration, to the State presidential primary, though a logical development of the primary principle has in practice fallen short of a full realization of the popular will.

The old type of national convention has probably written its own death warrant, but it is no means certain that a national presidential primary is to be its successor. There is another alternative. State prefers national primaries in every State to control the delegates to national conventions. Such a device is more elastic and less automatic than the system urged by President Wilson, for it preserves that none of compromise in which excellent results have been achieved in the past notably in the cases of Lincoln and Wilson. Champ Clark, commenting upon the system recommended by the Baltimore convention, said: "I wish there had been one last year."

It is quite possible that the abolition of the nominating convention would shut the door of hope upon many of capacity for public service, who have no other opportunity for demonstrating their fitness for a presidential nomination. If there had been no change in the avowals of the Alabama convention with its "Cross of Gold" speech, would there have been a Division? If there had been no Republican convention in 1856, overlooking the reasonableness of the proposition that Grant would have beaten the president and captured a third term in the process?

The proposal meets with enormous difficulties, theoretical and actual which will have to be surmounted before the present system of nominations can be cast aside. If the President pushes the recommendation—and it is likely that he will in time—the matter will be thrust out at great length before the thing is done.

The national presidential primary is to be preferred to the national nominating convention in its present form, but so drastic a change in the plan of our government must not be instituted until a thorough survey of the effects that would follow. It can be had, but there are some halos around in which the vice of both systems may be elicited and the virtues of each examined.

THE GREATEST MUSIC.

A performance of Beethoven's last piano concerto in four movements in the grand room of many feet was ever heard.

If our correspondents were more specific as to whether he means vocal or instrumental music, orchestra or operatic music we might expect an opinion, but in his silence as to the class of music he has in mind, we cannot venture judgment.

There is, we suspect, practically no difference of opinion as to the greatest symphony. Beethoven's Ninth holds an unassisted place to the exclusion of all others. We judge through our own knowledge and from those who have studied with care of his work.

With the coming of open books to each individual's disposal, the time of criticism of the worth of Beethoven's Ninth has been indefinitely postponed.

At any rate, the author of the article is right in his estimate that the Ninth is the greatest symphony ever composed.

Admirers of Wagner, the writer of this article, we have had three years of reading that the greatest of world music has been untrained during the century.

As far as his sympathies extend, he is right in his estimate that the Ninth is the greatest symphony ever composed.

Governor Cole's slogan is, "I stand by my friends." Hamilton, of course, is one of his friends. The Northern Stone and Observer, which evidently did not touch the touchy place, has a laudable vindication of his views.

It is believed that Mr. H. A. Threlkeld, a former member of the House of Representatives, is to speak at the balloon races and Obstacle race, which evidently will touch the touchy place in a large number of minds.

Whom the old-fashioned schoolboy who erased his slate with his tongue

THE WARS AVERTED.

There is gathered in Richmond today a company of the world's foremost men to plan for the observance of the years of peace between the United States and Great Britain. They come, as we take it, to consider how best they may return thanks, not less for peace maintained than for wars averted, and they are here to devise means by which we may cement in lasting love those ties of blood which bind us to the mother country.

We commend the long-footed lake-dwellers, not because we know what it is to suffer from bad weather; but because we live in a clime so perfect that we sorrow for any man who cannot share it.

Very modestly, very complacently, we announce to Chicago and to the like flocks slumbering with the Mistress of the Seas her supremacy of the waves, as we did for half a century, and standing as guardian of the troublesome tributaries to the south, we could but clash with the nation whose extant depended upon commerce and colonization.

In the days of the Holy Alliance, it will be recalled, when the United States were invited to join in a worldwide alliance to maintain the status quo in our relations with England, and with the other Great Powers, became strained over the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine.

For twenty years thereafter, we were in constant dispute with Great Britain over the Oregon boundary question. England had jointly occupied the territory with us in accordance with the terms of the convention of 1846, but had not yielded her claims farther south than the forty-ninth parallel. In 1855, when the Northwest boundary became an issue in politics, the cry of "Fifty or fight" was raised, and it was not until 1859 that the line was drawn and definitely agreed upon.

While this controversy was still keen, we had a disagreement regarding the protectorate of the Mosquito Indians, dwelling along the Caribbean coast. After the seizure of Greytown in 1848, war seemed eminent, nor did the possibility fade until the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was signed.

With the coming of the War Between the States arose new problems. That large element of the English population which sympathized with the South was insistent in its plea for our recognition, and gladly took advantage of the Mason-Dixie affair to demand intervention. By forbearance and diplomacy a clash was avoided—a clash that might have meant independence for the South.

No sooner was the war over than the Alabama claims presented a new cause for difference. Demanding indemnity for the ravages of the Alabama, andodium for its debt with more persistence than courtesy, the country was on the verge of war for many weeks and was saved from hostilities only by the proposal to submit the question to arbitration.

As for rainfall, it never comes in one day a year, when the thermometer falls below the freezing point; and we have enjoyed seasons, such as those of 1859 and 1869, when water froze only fifty-seven days during the twelve months. We have just enough cold weather to make it novel, just enough frosty mornings to make us glad we have no more. Only for thirty-one days the year does the temperature go above 90 degrees, while in 1865 we had only twenty-one days when that degree of heat was reached. Our last frost comes, on the average, April 4, while the winter's final flurry of snow is not later than March 11. As frost does not appear again until October 22, and snow not until November 20, we may claim the long southern summer without its heat. Our humidity—blanket off heat and cold alike—averages 78 per cent, reaching 82 per cent in April and 82 per cent in August.

As for rainfall, it never comes in one day a year, when the thermometer falls below the freezing point;

The mean precipitation for the year is but 41.5, just right to make both children and flowers grow, but not heavy enough to flood our river or to drown our gardens. For the information of those who wish the facts with which to silence possible disputants, we give the monthly averages rainfall in inches:

January, 2.00; February, 2.22; March, 2.75; April, 3.58; May, 3.82; June, 3.62; July, 3.88; August, 4.55; September, 3.34; October, 3.29; November, 2.88; December, 2.09.

But it is with clear skies and bright sunshine that Richmond is most blessed. Here is the simple fact, even though it drive to despair the foggy folks of Chicago: The sun shines on Richmond 60 per cent of every hour it is above the horizon during the year. And particularly during the months of spring and autumn, sunshine abounds—65 per cent in May, 64 per cent in September and 61 per cent in October. Of the year's calendar, 134 days are clear, 122 partly cloudy and only 67 can be classed as cloudy. And through the twelve months day in day out, the wind blows at seven miles the hour.

Mr. Evans's manuscript contains 311 titles and much more information that should be in the hands of every Richmond "booster." We submit but the salient points. On them we are confident to rest our claims; can any American city show a better record, can any city offer a greater attraction to visitors and settlers?

A FUTURE SCOUT.

If any boy be bad, he was six years ago they brought him into court and proved against him a charge which would have put a man in stripes. He was given a chance then on probation, but for some reason he did not make a good record; he reported tardily or not at all, would not attend school, and all but drove to distraction his overworked mother.

So the future seemed gloomy enough when he stood yesterday in Juvenile Court, a huddled little lad of twelve, washed, yet somewhat defiant, plucking mechanically at his hat and stealing an occasional glance at his mother. The officer of the court warned him again with him, tried to arouse him and appealed to his spirit. All in vain. He did not want to go to school, because his clothes were old, and he much preferred the factory and the high school at least until he earned enough to buy a new suit. As his mother noted the pitiable his small hands could earn, this seemed the only alternative; his probation was renewed, his record was started afresh, and he was about to leave the courtroom, a sad warning in his ears.

By chance some one proposed the remedy: "Suppose we let you try to join the Boy Scouts and give you a uniform, if the scoutmaster will let you enlist?" In a moment the cloud lifted, and the sulky little face was flooded with the sunshine of joy. Did he want to join? He would do anything in the world to gain a place on the roster. Did he have to promise honesty, obedience, truthfulness and the rest? He would show those qualities and earn admittance. The world was made over, his little life had a purpose. For the first time his heart had set for itself an ideal. And as he left the courtroom, few who saw him would have recognized him.

Will our little fellow make a good scout? Watch him!

THE SUNSHINE NOWHERE.

Those sorrowful souls who sigh away their gloomy lives on the blustery shores of Lake Michigan bewail the fact that the sun has not shone for twelve days in Chicago. Accustomed though they are to the whims of climate, and doomed to clouds and mists, they think this is a little too much persecution even for stoical Chicagoans, and they announce their misery to the world.

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lake-dwellers, not because we know

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tension depended upon commerce and

colonization.

WHAT WAS NEWS FIFTY YEARS AGO

Reprinted from This Newspaper,

From the Army of Northern Virginia.

The Yankees army has recrossed the Rapidan, turning northward. This movement is inexplicable. The enemy was pursued, but before he could be reached had recrossed.

The Divided Sympathy of Britain.

Henry Ward Beecher has returned

from Europe. In a speech in Brooklyn he said that in Great Britain the Americans are Northern or Southern much more strongly than we at home are;

that the Dissenting Church favors the South; that the mass of the British people sympathize with the North; that business men and most influential oligarchs are for the South;

that the English nobility is for the South, because "they fear the effect we will have in Europe as soon as we have put an end to the war"; if a

vote were taken in Parliament, avers

Mr. Beecher, there would be two

parties in the South.

The Sovereign of Europe.

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Rapidan, turning northward. This

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The Federalists.

Two Yankee gunboats and one trans-

port landed at Smithfield Tuesday, and

many men were sent ashore. They ar-

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High Prices of Mules.

Mules sold in Harris County, Georgia,

last week at the extraordinary prices

of \$2,500 and \$3,000 each—each.

The Richmond Volunteers.

Our city volunteers are to be pre-

pared for a call to defend the city.

The City Council yesterday resolved

to grant the use of one of the steam fire engines of the city to the

Confederate Guards.

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of Richmond, will meet at the county

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